Letter from Taizé

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Easter in Taizé

In the Gospel we find words that are so unique that we can say to ourselves: it's a miracle that they have come down to us. An example of this are these words, written by Saint Paul: "You are risen with Christ" (Eph 2,6; Col 2,12; 3,1-4).

What Paul wants to tell us is that, even if we all die in our bodies, for each of us our own resurrection has already begun here on earth. It is within us like a flame that will never go out.

Sometimes it is not easy to trust in the resurrection. But there is no need to worry. Then we can say to God, "Look not at my weak faith but at the faith of your Church, from the first Christians down to those of the present day. I can find support in their faith, incomparably."

God knows that in all of us there is a spirit of childhood, and God never wishes to burden us with what we cannot understand. Faith is not a complicated reality. It is like a movement of trust repeated time and time again in the course of our life. It is a simple trusting, so simple that all can make it their own.

It is true that sometimes doubt can coexist in us with faith. During his lifetime, Jesus himself heard with his own ears someone tell him, "I believe; I trust." But then, that believer was honest enough to add immediately, "Help my unbelief, my doubt" (Mark 9,24).

Even if we come to the point of saying, "I am not able to love God and Christ," there is no reason to worry. The most important thing for each one of us is to remember these words of Saint John, "I was not the one who loved God; God loved me first" (1 John 4,10.19).

Christ never asks us to torment ourselves. He loves every human being without exception. Risen from the dead, he says to each of us, "I am here. I shall never abandon you. Never."

aster meditation by Brother Roger

During the Easter period, from March 18 to April 14, 10,000 young people from Eastern and Western Europe came to Taizé, searching for the wellsprings of faith and preparing themselves at the same time to assume responsibilities to build Europe and to construct the human family across the earth.

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On Holy Saturday evening, Brother Roger spoke of the young Irish brother who was making his life-commitment in the community during the Easter vigil: "This evening, he will say a yes for ever, committing himself for life in our community. Because of Christ and the Gospel, he will live his entire life in celibacy, available with his brothers to live out a parable of community. He will have to live out the words of Christ: "Go, sell what you have, give it to the poor, and follow me!" Seeing him, I say to myself: "Happy the community that becomes an abyss of kindness."

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Those responsable for Catholic and Protestant religious programming on one of the German television channels, RTL Plus, and on Dutch television, in an ecumenical endeavor, broadcast live to their countries the Easter vigil celebration. The celebration was also broadcast live by Czechoslovakian television, and rebroadcast the following day in East Germany. At the same time, the BBC showed a Taizé prayer that had been filmed earlier.

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On Easter morning, the Eucharist was concelebrated by several priests from Chile and a Chinese priest. At the end of the celebration, the bells began to ring out just as the Easter greeting was exchanged in all the languages present.

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Throughout the summer and until November, the intercontinental meetings will be held each week in Taizé. If those who will come could discover something very simple, but also intense, by going to the wellsprings of trust in Christ, then they will also be able to find ways to share with others what they have understood. Two Latin American girls, from Brazil and Peru, who spent Easter at Taizé reflected on ways of helping the young people who will be taking part in these weeks of meeting. They wrote: "What we see on our planet is incomprehensible—wars, injustices, catastrophes, famines. We are not responsable for this. But we have to find a way out. We have lived these days in a spirit of sharing and solidarity. Our wish is that when we return home we can build something, each of us in our own situation, by our actions, but especially by what we are."

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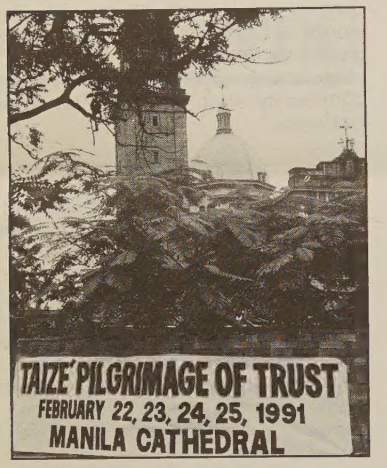
At the end of the year, the European meeting will take place which is always held for six days between Christmas and the beginning of January. After Wroclaw and Prague, once again it will be held in an Eastern European country. It will be in Hungary, in the city of **Budapest.**

Manila

Beyond the usual walls

The meeting in Manila brought together 15,000 young people, from February 22-25, from the Philippines and other Asian countries. Here are some echoes:



« The cathedral and the other buildings used for the meeting are located in "Intramuros," in the heart of the capital with its twelve million inhabitants. As the name indicates, Intramuros used to be a city surrounded by ramparts. It was the military centre of the country a century ago, during the Spanish-American War. High brick walls protected the city.

More than a century later, we are still in a period of war and crisis. But today, thousands of young people have come to this city not for war, but to look for peace. During these days of prayer and sharing, they tried to find ways of breaking down walls, not the walls of Intramuros, but those of the whole country, walls that divide and wound the human family.

Meeting together to pray twice a day was something new for us. Perhaps we have never before prayed as much as we did during this pilgrimage. For many, however, it seemed as if even this was not enough, because they stayed a long time in the church after the prayers.

Some allowed themselves to be brought to God by the singing of others; others waited in a long line to place their forehead on the cross; still others let their hearts speak to God through singing, and in this way expressed what they had kept buried within themselves for a long time.

One of the young people, of the Ifugao tribe, in the mountains, said, "One of the results of the meeting that we will bring home is this style of prayer that helps people reflect on their life in relationship to God.

Many will try to find ways of sharing it in their parishes and continue it at home. The present crisis is not only economic; it is also a crisis of confidence in ourselves. That is why the meeting was important at this particular moment."

The prayer of singing

« It can happen that we think: I don't know how to pray," said Brother Roger during one of the common prayers. "We should not worry about this. When we are together, the prayer of singing is an incomparable support. During the prayer, we remain in silence for a moment.

During a common prayer, a moment of silence is enough. This silence in the presence of Christ seems almost nothing. Yet, as the years pass, by this long continuity, the depth of our soul is touched.

"When we are praying alone, our mouth may remain shut. But our heart speaks to Christ spontaneously, whether we are outdoors, working or resting. For example, we can say to him, «Jesus Christ, you are inner Light.» Or else: «Jesus Christ, enable me to welcome your love, your forgiveness.»"

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Until November
tens of thousands
of young people
will spend
a week
at Taizé

Coming from a
directions, they
attempt, by
drawing from one
and the same
source, to find
ways of being
bearers of
reconciliation in
the human family

The intercontinental meetings at Taizé

his year, the meetings will be larger than ver, with more participants from Eastern Europe. Already in 1990, several hundred young adults from Romania and different publics of the Soviet Union were able to come. Thanks to the solidarity of the Hungarians and the Poles, this year the burney will be easier for them. At this time of reconstruction, when the first general enthusiasm has passed, many say how essential it is to share a hope, as for example this pastor from the former East Germany: "I admire the personal ommitment of those who are taking part in the reconstruction after forty years of ictatorship. I like to compare our present situation with the exodus from Egypt and the crossing of the wilderness. In our current struggles, we remember that in ne desert the people learned to know and rust in God. We need prayer now so that aith, hope and love will grow among us." Young people will also come from other continents, from the Philippines, for example, bringing the courage and intensity that characterized the Manila meeting. Their experiences will help us nderstand better how Christ calls us to a efinitive commitment as members of the Church at the heart of human realities.

or young people between the ages of 17 and : Week-long meetings throughout the year. Plan arrive Sunday afternoon and leave the following unday at noon. It is also possible to come for a eekend, from Friday evening to Sunday noon. ose who come as a group will be asked to split so that they can get to know others from differ- t countries.
ose who wish can choose a group which, in ad- ion to Bible introductions and times of sharing, responsible for most of the practical tasks. It is so possible to spend a week in silence, to let the spel shed light on one's life, with a daily Bible editation and personal conversations with a other or a sister. These choices are made upon rival after discussing the different possibilities th the welcome team.
r some young people, staying for a second or rd week in silence or helping with some practical rk, in order to deepen their search, proves to be important experience. Those who wish to do is should speak with a brother or sister during e first week.

or young people between the ages of 15 and : Those who accompany groups of young eople under 17 must be numerous enough (about e group leader for every eight boys or girls) to lp the brothers animate the meetings. Group aders remain with their group for lodging, meals d meetings, to help the young people to partici- te fully in everything. Possible dates: Easter lidays,Spring and Autumn half-term holidays. It also possible for groups who come during the mmer to include a small number of 15-16 year ds: please write to ask.

dults over 30 years: They are welcome for one eek, from Sunday to Sunday, preferably in April, ay, June, September or October. Arrive Sunday ternoon, depart following Sunday from 11.15am (Weekend stays also possible; Friday evening Sunday). Adults form a group together. Bible introductions, times of silence, small group discussions, meals together. In order to be able to welcome all those who wish to come, we ask adults to come only once a year, and that large groups be comprised not only of adults. Because of the lack of space, we ask adults who need a room or dormitory accomodation in Taizé itself (rather than in a nearby village), to avoid July and August. Please write in advance, giving the dates you wish to stay, and the number and ages of those intending to come. Please wait for our reply.

Parents with children: From late June to early September, each week, families form a group together. Arrive Sunday (from 3pm onwards) and leave the following Sunday. Children participate in some meetings: at other times, helpers run activities for children in groups according to age. It is important to prepare your children to help them live this week of prayer and sharing. Parents volunteer for a rota to look after the babies during the common prayer. If possible come with tent or caravan (mention on registration form).

It is useful to bring a **Bible.**

Accommodation: all accommodation is very simple. If possible bring a tent, especially at Easter, Pentecost and during the summer. Young people under 30: in tents or in heated dormitories (boys and girls separate). Bring sleeping-bag, blanket and lightweight mattress.
Adults over 30: according to age, in dormitories or in a shared room, (in Taizé or, because of lack of space, in a nearby village). You will be told of your sleeping place when you arrive in Taizé. Bring sheets or sleeping-bag and write well in advance, waiting for our reply.

Participation in costs: there are three funds at Taizé, one for the community and two for the meetings: The community: the community of brothers accepts no donations, no gifts, or personal inheritances, whatsoever for itself. Its only income is from its own work. If there is any surplus at the end of the year, it is given to the Meetings Fund in order to be able to repair the buildings used to receive those who come to Taizé.

The two meetings funds: the meetings in Taizé receive no financial aid from any organisation. The only sources of income are people sharing in the daily expenses on one hand, and voluntary contributions to a Solidarity Fund (thanks to which it is possible to welcome people who cannot pay themselves for the entire cost of their stay).
Currencies of different countries vary in value, so the amount people contribute varies. Each pays according to how they are able on arrival. 1990 suggested prices, in French Francs per day - for young people under thirty: GB, NZ and Scand: 28 to 35, IRL: 25-32, USA, Can., Aus.: 37-44. And for adults: GB, NZ and Scand: 62-90 (in tent), 76-100 (dormitory), 92-115 (room). IRL: 55-75 (tent), 65-85 (dormitory), 80-100 (room). USA, Can., Aus.: 80-110 (tent), 90-120 (dormitory), 105-135 (room). Sleeping place is indicated on arrival.Please pay on arrival in French Franc (Cash, Eurocheque or French Franc travellers' cheques). Those who wish, in addition, to give to the Solidarity Fund can do so while in Taizé or by sending a Eurochequr or International Bank Draft in French Francs payable to "Taizé - Solidarity Fund".

Medical insurance: Bring document(s) needed (E1-11 for EC residents) to refund medical costs incurred in France.

Registration for meetings: Send in the completed registration form. A fine welcome for everyone will be made possible in summer, if those who have the choice come in early July, late August or September and rather than the last weeks of July or the first weeks of August.

Travel: Regular coach service from London to Taizé. Depart London at 2200, arrive Taizé 1500 the next day. Depart Taizé 1630, arrive London 0700 next morning. UK departures 1990: Sat 26 May, Sat 2 June, then every Sat to 6 Oct plus 20 Oct. 1990 departures from Taizé: Sun 3 June to 7 Oct plus 28 Oct. Departure points: London; Victoria Methodist Church, Westmoreland Terrace, SW1; Dover; Special pick-up points for groups.
Please book in advance. All details from Nuneaton Coaches, Whiteacre Road, NUNEATON, Warks. CV11 6BN. tel: (0203) 325682/328410 - fax: (0203) 375875. ■

Registration form to be sent to: Meetings, TAIZE-COMMUNITY, 71250 CLUNY, France. (Tel. 85.50.18.18)

FIRST NAME :

FAMILY NAME :

ADDRESS :

(with post code and country)

Tel.: ...../..... Occupation: ..... Age : .....

Please circle "Yes" or "No":

- I wish to participate in the meeting from: ..... to .....
- I will bring a tent: Yes / No
- If you are driving to Taizé or coming by St. Peter's Coaches, please tick:

car ☐ minibus ☐ St. Peter's Coaches ☐

- For the disabled, adult group-leaders, those who cannot sleep on the floor, please fill in the following: I need a bed: Yes / No. **And if "yes", please circle below who you are:**

woman man couple family with....children disabled person helper of disabl.pers.

- I receive the Letter from Taizé: yes / no
- I have been to Taizé: Yes / No (Last stay: month ..... year .....

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Manila...

«In the welcome team that had been preparing the meeting for over a year, people spoke freely of little miracles! The first one was the constant presence of clouds during the three days; they covered the burning sun. But it never rained.

The second was that accommodations were found for all, for hundreds of persons during the last days. The whole meeting was a great experience of sharing, and the food never ran out. In the last stage of the preparation, there was much worry on account of the economic situation.

And if the Gulf War caused transportation prices to rise, how could people come from other parts of the country? Even the army helped, by providing twenty-five lorries to transport coconut leaves to cover the "kubol," a huge covered space where prayers were held and which was like an extension of the cathedral; each day they also transported the participants from the parishes who could not afford the cost of public transportation.

"Where are the children?" was one of Brother Roger's first questions when he arrived at the airport. And in fact, some fifty children from Smokey Mountain, a slum in the centre of Manila where people survive by sorting rubbish, were there to welcome him. Children were also with him during the prayers, in a city where a million children live in the streets.

Spontaneously, after the first prayer, children from the slums near the cathedral began to help with the cleaning. We took the time to speak and to play with them, and more of them came each day. And Brother Roger concluded:

"We are going to give ourselves a year, from Easter 1991 to Easter 1992, all together, to enter into the call to reconciliation. During this year, we are all going to search, with imagination; we are going to live captivating Gospel realities, in the places where God has placed each one of us.

Refusing to be anybody's enemy

When you return home, many of you are going to discover complex situations. Some will manage to reconcile wounded situations in which they find themselves. Others will do all they can to persevere in places where the human family is torn apart.

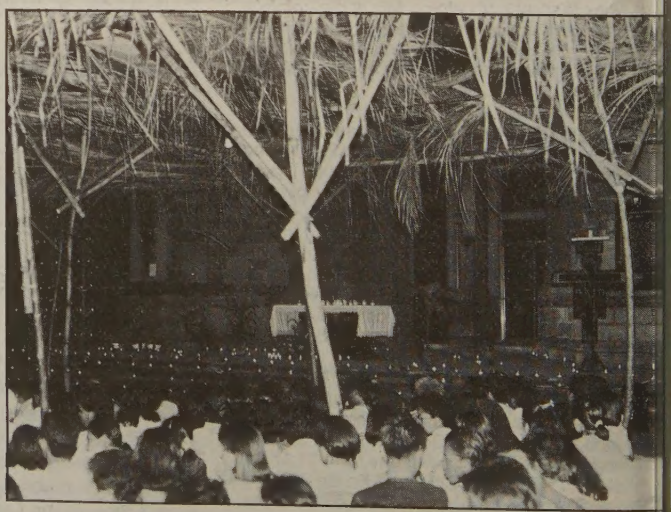
"If each person could make this inner attitude their own: refusing, on account of the Gospel, to be anybody's enemy at all. Of course, seeking reconciliation and trust involves an inner struggle. It is not the way of least resistance. It is not a naive trust that would shut its eyes to abuses of trust.

"When we realize that the Gospel calls us to be creators of reconciliation, we sometimes hesitate. Why be afraid? Jesus, the Christ, is sending us. And so we can go forward, with simple trust in him."

"The meeting was an important experience for our Church in the Philippines on a national level. So many things happened for the first time; people from widely different backgrounds worked together. We are used to working within structures and to be with those who think like us.

The pilgrimage gave us an opportunity to go beyond the usual walls, to visit one another. This gives us a sense of the Church, of its universality. We have experienced that we can work together despite so many differences." □

With the children of Smokey Mountain. ■ Young adults from all the inhabited islands discovering one and the same source. ▾▾▸



July

Meditating on the word

These short readings, taken from the midday prayer in Taizé, can be read several times during the day. The references indicate longer readings. If you have time to read only one, the one in bold type is suggested.

1 Mon Mt 9.9-13 • ***Col 2.12-14***
Having been buried with Christ in baptism, you have also been raised with him, because you have believed in the power of God who raised him from the dead.

2 Tue Mt 9.14-17 • ***Col 2.16-23***
Paul writes: Exterior rules are only the shadow of what is to come: the reality is the body of Christ.

3 Wed Ep 2.19-22 • ***Jn 20.24-29***
St THOMAS Jesus said to Thomas: You believe because you can see me. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe.

4 Thu Col 3.8-11 • ***Mt 9.35-38***
Jesus said to his disciples: The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few, so ask the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest.

5 Fri Mt 10.1-10 • ***Col 3.12-17***
May the peace of Christ reign in your hearts, because it is for this that you were called together in one Body. Live in thankfulness.

6 Sat Mt 10.22-25/29-31 • ***Col 4.2-6***
Persevere in prayer, being watchful and thankful.

7 SUN Mk 6.1-6 • ***2 Co 12.7-10***
Paul writes: God said to me: My grace is sufficient for you, for my strength is made perfect in weakness.

8 Mon Is 40.1-5 • ***Mt 10.39-42***
Jesus said: Anyone who finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it.

9 Tue Is 40.6-8 • ***Mt 11.1-6***
Jesus said: Go back and report what you hear and see: the blind receive sight, the lame walk, the dead are raised to life, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor.

10 Wed Mt 11.7-15 • ***Is 40.9-11***
The Lord tends his flock like a shepherd. He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart.

11 Thu Mt 11.25-27 • ***Is 40.25-28***
The Lord says: Why do you complain, my people, saying, "My way is hidden from the Lord, my cause is disregarded by God"? Do you not know? The Lord is the everlasting God, the creator of the world; he does not tire or grow weary.

12 Fri Is 40.29-31 • ***Mt 11.28-30***
Jesus said: Come to me, you who labour and are overburdened, and I will give you rest.

13 Sat Mt 12.1-8 • ***Is 41.8-10***
The Lord says: Do not be afraid. I am your God, your help, your strength and your salvation.

14 SUN Am 7.12-15 • ***Mk 6.7-13***
Calling the Twelve to him, Jesus sent them out two by two. And they went preaching the need to change one's heart and they drove out many evil spirits.

15 Mon Mt 12.7-14 • ***Is 41.17-20***
The Lord says: When the oppressed and needy search for water and there is none, I the Lord will answer them. I shall not forsake them. I will open rivers upon the barren heights and fountains in the valleys.

16 Tue Is 42.5-7 • ***Mt 12.15-21***
Jesus fulfilled the words of the prophet Isaiah: My servant will not quarrel or cry out, he will not snuff out the smouldering wick. All the nations will put their hope in him.

17 Wed Is 42.10/16 • ***Mt 12.46-50***
Jesus said: Anyone who does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother.

18 Thu Mt 13.1-9 • ***Is 43.1-4***
The Lord says: You are precious in my eyes, I value you and I love you.

19 Fri Is 43.10-13 • ***Mt 13.10/16-23***
Jesus said: The seed which was sown in good soil is like someone who hears the Word and understands it; that person bears fruit.

20 Sat Mt 13.24-30 • ***Is 43.18-20***
God says: Do not dwell upon the past, look, I am doing something new.

21 SUN Jr 23.1-6 • ***Mk 6.30-34***
Jesus and his disciples went to a lonely place where they could be by themselves. From every town, people hurried to the place and reached it before them. Seeing the large crowd, Jesus had compassion on them because they were like sheep without a shepherd.

22 Mon Rm 8.28-30 • ***Jn 20.1/11-18***
The Risen Christ said to Mary of Magdala: Go and find my brothers and tell them: I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.

23 Tue **Mt 13.31-32** • *Is 44.1-4*
The Lord says: Do not be afraid, my servant whom I have chosen. I shall pour out my Spirit on your offspring.

24 Wed Mt 13.33-35 • ***Is 44.21-23***
The Lord says: I have dispelled your offenses like a cloud, and your sins like the morning mist. Come back to me, for I have redeemed you.

25 Thu 2 Co 4.7-11 • ***Mt 20.20-28***
St JAMES Jesus said: The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life for many.

26 Fri Is 45.22-24a • ***Mt 13.44-46***
Jesus said: The kingdom of heaven is like a trader looking for precious pearls; when he finds one of great value, he goes, sells all he has and buys it.

27 Sat Mt 14.22-33 • ***Is 46.3-4/8-9***
The Lord says to his people: I have carried you since you were conceived. Until your old age I shall be the same, I shall sustain and save you.

28 SUN 2 K 4.42-44 • ***Jn 6.1-15***
After the people saw the miraculous sign worked by Jesus, they began to say: "Surely this is the prophet who is to come into the world." Jesus, realizing that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, withdrew to the hills again, alone.

29 Mon Is 48.3/6-11 • ***Mt 16.13-20***
Jesus asked his disciples: "Who do people say I am?" "Some say John the Baptist," they answered, "some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." "But you," he said, "who do you say I am?" Peter spoke up and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

30 Tue Mt 16.21-28 • ***Is 48.20-21***
The people of God did not go thirsty when he led them through the desert; he made water spring out of the rock for them.

31 Wed Is 49.13-15 • ***Mt 18.1-5***
Jesus said: Anyone who welcomes one little child in my name welcomes me.

Johannine Hours

Romans 8,11.14-17

Johannine hours are suggested as a way of seeking God in silence and prayer, in the midst of our life at home. During the course of the day take a couple of hours to read the Bible passage with the short commentary and to reflect on the questions which follow. Afterwards, the group (3 to 10 people) meet together to share what they have discovered and perhaps for a time of prayer.

"We are children of God!" - For the first Christians, that was a great discovery (see also 1 John 3,1). The Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead enables us to pray with the word "Abba", the very same word Jesus used when he spoke to God (Mark 14,36)!

Jesus' entire life was defined by his relationship to the Father (see Matt 11,27). Jesus does not want us to see himself alone; he wants us to discover his relationship with God, his Father. That is his secret (see Matt 3,17; 17,5): he is the Son; at every moment he receives life from God. Jesus knew that in the events he was called to live God would reveal the fullness of his love. And Christ never lost this confident trust, even in times of temptation and suffering, when events seemed to prove the opposite (see John 13,1).

Risen from the dead, Jesus said, "I am going up to my Father and your Father" (John 20,17; see also Heb 2,11-13; Eph 2,18). He gave us "the ability to become children of God" (John 1,12), people who no longer imagine God as someone arbitrary who would refuse a fullness. Our life is not a more or less fortunate accident; it is entrusted to us by God. And God will not allow that gift to be crushed. Welcoming every moment of our life does not mean becoming fatalists; such an attitude liberates imaginative powers so that we can be creative, even in difficult situations, because it makes more and more room in the depths of our being for a love that chases away fear and bitterness. Christ warned us that this would involve a struggle, because the Tempter does not want us to live in such a trusting relationship with God. But the Holy Spirit constantly reminds us of the truth, so our lips can say the words that Jesus bequeathed to us: "Our Father...".

- What helps me to welcome the events of my life and not get lost in dreamsof a different world?
Where can we find the courage to go towards those who suffer more than we do, to welcome them and to express our trust that God offers them a hope, that he remains their "Abba"?

Meditating on the word

August

These short readings, taken from the midday prayer in Taizé, can be read several times during the day. The references indicate longer readings. If you have time to read only one, the one in bold type is suggested.

1 Thu **Mt 18.19-22** • *Is 50.4-7*
The Lord has given me a disciple's tongue, so that I may know how to comfort the one who is exhausted.

2 Fri Is 52.13-15 • ***Mt 19.16-22***
Jesus said to a rich young man: If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.

3 Sat Is 53.1-5 • ***Mt 19.23-26***
In astonishment at Jesus' words, the disciples asked him, "Who then can be saved?" Jesus looked at them and said, "By human resources this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

4 SUN Ex 16.2-15 • ***Jn 6.24-35***
The people asked Jesus, "What must we do to do God's work?" Jesus replied, "The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent."

5 Mon Is 54.10-14 • ***Mt 19.27-29***
Jesus said: Anyone who leaves home, brothers, sisters, father, mother, children or fields for my sake will receive much more and will inherit eternal life.

6 Tue 2 P 1.16-19 • ***Mk 9.2-10***
TRANSFIGURATION Jesus was transfigured in the presence of his disciples. And a cloud covered them with its shadow, and from the cloud a voice came, saying, "This is my beloved Son; listen to him."

7 Wed Is 55.10-13 • ***Mt 20.17-19***
Jesus said: The Son of man will be handed over to the chief priests and scribes. They will condemn him to death and turn him over to be mocked, scourged and crucified; and on the third day he will be raised up again.

8 Thu Mt 20.20-28 • ***Mi 4.1-4***
Days will come when many peoples will come and say, "Let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, so that he may teach us his ways." And they will hammer their swords into ploughshares and their spears into bill-hooks.

9 Fri Mt 20.29-33 • ***Mi 6.6-8***
This is what the Lord wants of you, only this: to act justly, to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God.

10 Sat Mt 21.1-11 • ***Mi 7.18-20***
What God can compare with you, Lord, for pardoning sin and overlooking transgression? You will again have compassion on us, treading our sins underfoot.

11 SUN 1 K 19.4-8 • ***Jn 6.41-51***
Jesus said: It is written in the prophets, "They will all be taught by God." Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from him, comes to me.

12 Mon Mt 21.13-17 • ***2 Co 1.1-7***
Just as the sufferings of Christ overflow into our lives, so also through Christ our comfort overflows.

13 Tue Mt 21.28-32 • ***2 Co 1.18-22***
Christ Jesus was never Yes-and-No; his nature is all Yes. For in him is found the Yes to all God's promises.

14 Wed Mt 22.15-22 • ***2 Co 3.1-8***
God has made us able to serve a new covenant, one which is not of written letters but of the Spirit which gives life.

15 Thu **Lk 1.39-56** • *1 Co 15.20-26*
THE VIRGIN MARY Mary said: My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my saviour, because he has looked upon his humble servant.

16 Fri Jn 3.1-8 • ***2 Co 4.6-11***
We carry the treasure of God's glory in earthen vessels so that it may be quite clear that the radiance comes from God, not from us.

17 Sat **Jn 3.9-17** • *2 Co 5.1-5*
Paul writes: We know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven.

18 SUN Ep 5.15-20 • ***Jn 6.51-58***
Jesus said: I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Anyone who eats this bread will live for ever.

19 Mon **Jn 4.1-14** • *2 Co 5.16-21*
Anyone who is in Christ is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come.

20 Tue **Jn 4.14-26** • *2 Co 6.1-10*
Paul writes: We are considered sorrowful, we who are always rejoicing; we are thought of as having nothing, we who possess everything.

21 Wed 2 Co 8.1-5 • ***Jn 4.27-42***
Jesus said: My food is to do the will of the One who sent me and to complete his work.

22 Thu Jn 4.43-54 • ***2 Co 9.6-15***
Paul writes: Anyone who sows generously will also reap generously. And God is able to enrich you with every grace so that, having all you need, your resources overflow in all kinds of good work.

23 Fri 2 Co 11.21-31 • ***Jn 5.1-9***
Jesus said to a sick man: "Get up, pick up your sleeping mat and walk." At once the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked.

24 Sat 2 Co 13.4-13 • ***Jn 5.10-18***
Paul wrote: Do you not recognise yourselves as people in whom Jesus Christ is present? Remain joyful and live in peace.

25 SUN Ep 5.21-32 • ***Jn 6.60-69***
Seeing that many of his disciples were turning away, Jesus said to the Twelve, "What about you, do you want to go away too?" Peter answered, "Lord, to whom would we go? You have the words of eternal life."

26 Mon Jn 9.1-12 • ***1 Tm 1.1-2/12-17***
Paul writes: I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength. By calling me into his service he has considered me trustworthy.

27 Tue Jn 9.13-17 • ***1 Tm 2.1-6***
God wants all people to be saved and to reach full knowledge of the truth.

28 Wed **Jn 9.18-38** • *1 Tm 3.14-16*
Christ was made visible in the flesh, attested by the Spirit, seen by angels, preached to the nations, believed in throughout the world and taken up in glory.

29 Thu 1 Tm 4.7-11 • ***Jn 11.1-27***
Jesus said to Martha: I am the resurrection. The one who believes in me shall live, even though he dies. And whoever lives and believes in me shall never die.

30 Fri **Jn 11.28-45** • *1 Tm 4.12-16*
Paul writes to Timothy: You have in you a spiritual gift which was given to you. Do not neglect it.

31 Sat 1 Tm 6.11-12 • ***Jn 14.1-6***
Jesus said: Do not let your hearts be troubled. You trust in God, trust also in me.

Johannine Hours

1 Corinthians 12,12-27

Johannine hours are suggested as a way of seeking God in silence and prayer, in the midst of our life at home. During the course of the day take a couple of hours to read the Bible passage with the short commentary and to reflect on the questions which follow. Afterwards, the group (3 to 10 people) meet together to share what they have discovered and perhaps for a time of prayer.

The call to unity, unknown in the Old Testament, is a priority in the New Testament. This is because with Christ an absolutely new reality has been created: a communion which is not merely the more or less successful juxtaposition of isolated individuals, but a radical dependency on one another. By baptism we have become members of the same body, which constantly receives its life from Christ.

The last evening he spent with his disciples, Jesus prayed that we might be one just as he is one with the Father (John 17,20-24). Christ's love brings us into his own oneness with the Father and creates a communion among us that is a reflection of that unity in the world. This communion is a shared life between Christ and us: "I am the vine, you are the branches" (John 15,5).

How can we live out this unity in our human relationships? Saint Paul shows us the way: "If one part of the body suffers, then all the parts suffer with it. If one part is honoured, then all the parts are joyful" (v. 26). Since Christ is in us, I no longer have to be afraid of the other person, to see in them something I do not have, or even to see them as a threat to my own life. I can discover a complementarity between us; still more, I participate in the good that the other accomplishes; I share in their suffering. Not cutting ourselves off from others in a spirit of comparison, not wishing to affirm ourselves to the detriment of others but trying to be "in" the other person: this attitude frees us from the need to "play a role" and makes us joyful at others' gifts. Instead of an individualistic perfection, the Gospel asks us to live with our whole being an effort of communion, to let Christ's life circulate. "Your attitude should be that of Christ Jesus..." (Phil 2,5-11).

- Who are the people with whom I am called to live a commitment to unity?
  How can we express more deeply, in our parishes and communities, that we are one body, dependent upon one another?

Soviet Union

Rediscoveries

Two young men visited several republics of the USSR to make contact with those who had taken part in last summer's meetings in Taizé or in the European meeting in Prague.

One word kept coming up during our five-week long visit through the Baltic countries, the Ukraine and Russia — the word «rediscovery.» Everywhere there is a great thirst to rediscover the faith, the tradition, their deep identity — realities already present but deeply buried and that need to be rediscovered.

The situation is very different from one republic to another and it is hard to make comparisons. But the wounds that recent history have left are the same. And everywhere there is great lassitude and total uncertainty with respect to the future. There is also a greater or lesser tension one can feel in the different republics.

The faith of the "babushkas"

But underneath all these peoples and countries there is a kind of vast river that carries everything in its current. It can be recognized in the explicit faith of the "babushkas" (grandmothers) as well as in the burning expectation that animates so many of the young.

One day, in the metro of Kiev, an old lady entered our car. She looked very ill. Someone gave her his seat. Her face was full of suffering and love. Her simple presence brought a light into the car. Two stations further on, two other places became empty and she insisted that we sit down. She was concerned about us. Then she began to speak in Ukrainian.

"The two most precious things in life," she said, "are good health and God's blessing." She knew what she was talking about. She had lost her husband and her son. But her heart was still wide open and full of love. I gave her a card showing the Virgin Mary. Her eyes brightened; she made the sign of the cross and began to pray.

Once we visited a rock music school in Moscow, a typical Russian club, "The Red Chemist." We spent two hours meeting with young people. The atmosphere was loaded with questions, with astonishment, with the desire to know more. "What was your road to God? What is the Christian faith? What is light?" Many questions that sprang straight from their lives. At the end we sang some Taizé songs and I think they understood much better.

In the Church, the situation is complex: there are different and opposing tendencies. The spectrum goes all the way from the ultra-nationalistic traditionalists to those who preach an ecumenism that includes other religions such as Buddhism.

Father Vladimir, the successor to Father Men, who was recently assassinated, explained to us, "We must work to bring out the heart of the faith more clearly. Those who are «curiosity seekers» about religion must deepen their searching; those who see religion only as something for old ladies need to discover the deeper dimensions of the faith; the nationalists need to remember that Jesus was a Jew; those who are sometimes too open, without discernment, need to become more deeply rooted in their own tradition and to discover all the beauties of the Orthodox Church."

There is a great need for people to bring into the light all that is hidden within themselves. "The Russian people has a great vitality and immense creative possibilities, a love of the inner life. But all that was attacked by the system and for generations was not able to express itself... So it turned against people and led to that aggressivity and bitterness which we confront every day and which poison our lives."

For those who had taken part in the meetings in Taizé last summer, or in the Prague meeting, there was a rediscovery of kindness, a meeting with people who are open and who try to understand one another. All were welcomed in the same way, as free and responsable persons. "I felt like a civilized person," one young man told me.

We arrived in Lithuania just after the events of January 12. It seemed as if the entire nation was praying in the churches. The difficulties reinforced the people's unity and made them stronger.

Although we had not informed them in advance, a whole group of young people set out with us on an improvised pilgrimage through the snow-covered countryside. We stopped in different villages and the people, big and little, met in someone's home for a gathering and a prayer.

Sometimes the parish priest came to celebrate Mass in the house. Sometimes the meeting took place in the school with the children and the teachers and we prayed in a classroom.

We discovered so much goodness on our journey that we were carried forward by unexpected meetings. People welcomed us with their whole hearts, sometimes giving us more than they had for themselves. That is perhaps the most urgent thing at present: to leap over walls of mistrust to discover kindness and goodness in the hearts of others. ■

A year to prepare **reconciliations**

At the end of the European meeting in Prague, Brother Roger invited all the participants to continue at home their search for reconciliation. One of the suggestions to prepare ourselves was to begin by arranging churches and places of prayer to make them more welcoming. Here, for example, is how some young people in a parish in the suburbs of Paris are doing this:

"When we returned home and spoke about the pilgrimage of trust in Prague, we realized that the prayer was the thing that touched us the most, that for several of us it prepared a way towards Christ. We were offered the possibility of restoring a chapel to make it welcoming for children in particular. Many of us volunteered for the different jobs—cleaning, carpentry, painting. But already, during this period when we were fixing up the chapel, the church remained open, so that many people came there to pray and to share with us. Other plans are taking shape too: collecting medicine for a parish in Africa and starting a singing group to help during Sunday worship."

On Holy Saturday evening, Brother Roger invited everyone to be attentive to prepare many paths of reconciliation:

In simplicity of heart, we would like the young people who come to Taizé to find a deep meaning for their life, and so to recognize one of the most urgent tasks for today.

What is this urgent task? At the beginning of this year, during our European meeting in Prague, this suggestion arose: during the year from this Easter day 1991 to Easter 1992, to prepare a great many paths of reconciliation, very concrete paths...

Reconciliation, both near at hand and also far away, is one of the urgent tasks for today. It is essential between Christians, to make Christ visible in his communion, his Church. And reconciliation is also essential to build up the European family and the human family across the earth.

It is good to know that for the Gospel, the search for reconciliation is not the line of least resistance. It is so true that nothing great, nothing vast, nothing lasting can be built if we take the easy way out.

The spirit of reconciliation is not naive but it is profound kindness, a widening of the heart. When we are reconciled, gradually the Gospel is able to transform our own hearts and it leads us to pray for those who hurt us (Matt 5,44).

The spirit of reconciliation does not listen to suspicions, or to harsh and definitive judgements.

We follow a Christ who came to earth not to judge the world but so that through him, the Risen Lord, every human being might be saved, reconciled, pacified.

And then, the peace of our heart makes life beautiful for those around us.

Brother Roger on the eve of Easter

Romania

In every language

"Gheorgheni, our town, like all the cities of Transylvania, has a large majority of Hungarian-speakers as well as many Romanian-speakers. When we returned from the European meeting in Prague, we asked ourselves what our five churches could do together: a Catholic church and a Calvinist church, both Hungarian-speaking, an Armenian Catholic church, and an Orthodox church and a Greek Catholic church for Romanian-speakers. With the priests and pastors, we agreed for the first time to pray for a week, every day in a different church.

We spoke about the Prague meeting and suggested coming together to share. We read parts of the Letter from Prague. One afternoon we went to visit sick and elderly people in a nursing home. On the weekend we had a prayer around the cross and, in the Orthodox church, a Resurrection vigil. For the first time, we sang together in every language, in all the churches."

EUROPE: REAWAKENED FROM WITHIN

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Information:
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Wednesday 19 June in **Glasgow**

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